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JOHN R. MOTT

An Appreciation
by
Ruth Rouse

THE WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION

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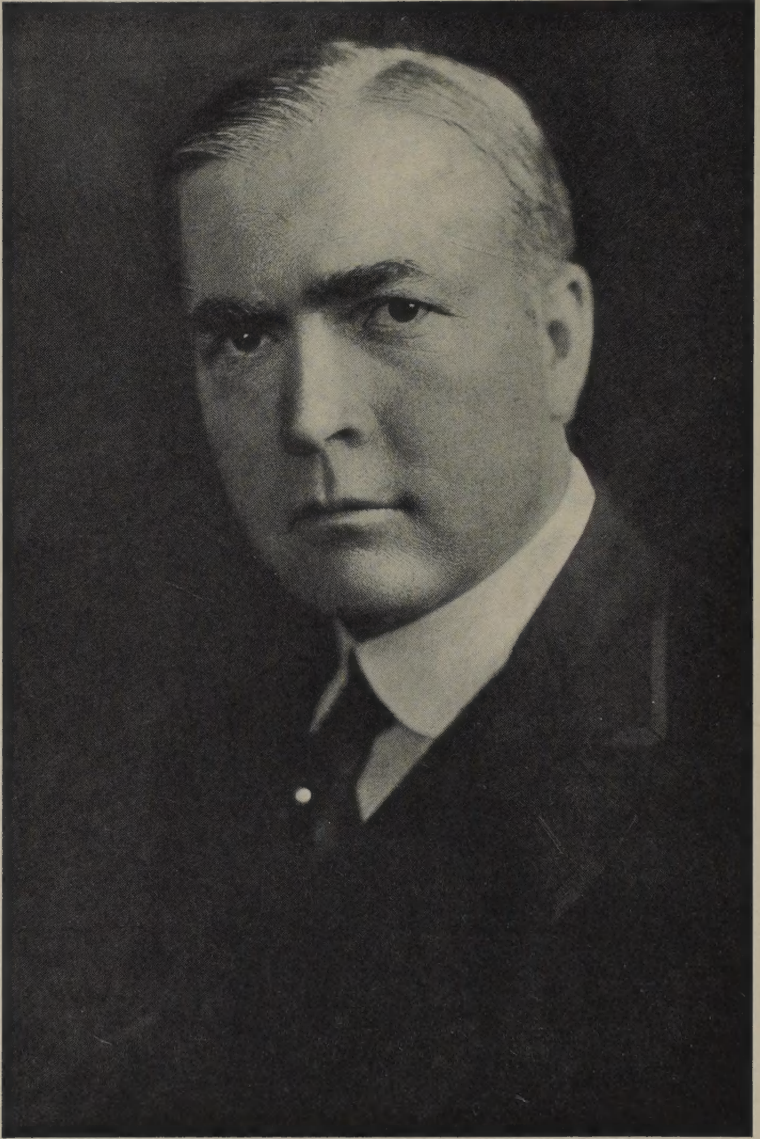
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JOHN R. MOTT

"You *are* the history of the Federation — you do not realise to what extent this is true." So wrote a friend to Dr. Mott, when he suggested handing over the writing of the history of the Federation to some one else. Dr. Mott will be known in the history of the Church as the Chairman and pioneer of the International Missionary Council, as the greatest leader the Y.M.C.A. has ever known. But, of all the organisations which call him their leader, the Federation perhaps is most nearly his child, a bit of his very self.

He served the Federation for thirty-three years. He was its General Secretary from its beginnings at Vadstena in 1895. He became its Chairman at Beatenberg in 1920. He did not lay down office until the Conference at Mysore, India, in 1928. The Federation was born in his heart and brain.

* "In the early part of the year 1894 he (Dr. Mott) was seized with the conviction that the time had at last arrived when a world-wide union of Christian students might be achieved, and he began to work towards this goal. ... He arranged to devote two years to a journey around the world with special reference to bringing about, if possible, a union of the Christian students of all lands. He decided to adopt a different plan from that which had been followed hitherto. Previous efforts had been confined largely to trying to effect such a union in the name and through the agency of the Young Men's Christian Association. The thought occurred to him that instead of attempting to organise the Christian students under any one name and according to any one plan of organisation,

* Extract from 'The World's Student Christian Federation, Origin, Achievements, Forecast', a record of the 'Achievements of the First Quarter-Century of The World's Student Christian Federation and Forecast of Unfinished Tasks', by *John R. Mott*, published by The World's Student Christian Federation, 1920.

it would be better to encourage the Christian students in each country to develop national Christian student movements of their own, adapted in name, organisation and activities to their particular genius and character, and then to link these together in some simple yet effective federation. ”

The Federation has been pivotal in his thought. Students are the lever by which he has sought to move the world towards God — they are “ Strategic Points in the World’s Conquest ” ; and it was no mere desire for a striking title which made him choose this name for the book which records his experiences on his first tour round the world, the tour, which lasted two years, 1895-1897, and followed on the foundation of the Federation at the Vadstena Conference. In times of special stress, he has always turned to the Federation hoping to capture those student strategic points. Confronted, for example, with the perils and opportunities of post-war reconstruction in 1920 (at a time when both he and I were resigning our posts as Secretaries of the Federation), he writes to me :

“ There comes over me a great longing that you and I might be able to devote a year or two (more) as Secretaries of this Federation work. It is the greatness and gravity of the difficulties which is making this appeal to me. ”

Vocation and Preparation.

To this man who was to lead the Federation — our Federation that is *Student, Christian* and *World’s* — a special preparation was given.

His student days were crucial in his development. It was at Cornell University, that John Mott passed from agnosticism to faith and went through the experience of conversion. It was as Secretary of the Cornell University Christian Association and therefore amongst students, that he tried his prentice hand on work for the Kingdom. It was while still at the University, that he received from C.K. Ober, at that time one of the leaders of the North American

Intercollegiate Y.M.C.A. Movement, that call to be a Student Travelling Secretary, which, after many refusals, he accepted for "just one year and no more"! It was at the University too that he saw the world's need of Christ, turned his thoughts to the mission field, and signed the Student Volunteer Declaration after that Student Conference at Mount Hermon, Massachusetts, at which the Student Volunteer Movement was born.

An international factor marked his first great spiritual experience. The fact that he owed his conversion to an address given at Cornell by an English student, J.K. Studd, the English cricketer, brother of C.T. Studd of the "Cambridge Seven" surely must have helped to give him that international ideal of the possibilities of a Student Christian Movement which created the Federation. Thus did there begin to develop in John Mott a world mind. It is as an instrument to win the world for his Lord that the Federation means so much to him.

Equipment and Gifts.

The Federation has had the whole-hearted service of a man whose world experience is unique. It was in the purpose of God early to set him free from the trammels that hamper most men and women vowed to a missionary life. John Mott has served many organisations, the American Y.M.C.A. as Student Secretary, as Secretary of its Foreign Department, and as its General Secretary, also as Chairman, of the World's Y.M.C.A., the Student Volunteer Movement, the International Missionary Council, the World's Student Christian Federation and of the Institute of Social and Religious Research; but in a sense he has been bound to no one of them. Early in his career the insight of one woman and two or three men into the world work that he might do, caused them to arrange for him a financial independence which has made it possible for him to serve all these organisations at the same time. No other man living — one might say, perhaps, no other Christian, who has ever lived — has had the opportunity to visit and

revisit every mission field in the world over a period of thirty-five years, as well as most lands that are not known as mission fields.

“ I have made four continuous around the world journeys in connection with which my attention was devoted largely to the mission fields, four additional trips to the Far East, and three additional trips to the Near East. ”

This means that besides coming to Europe almost every year at least once he has visited Japan and China each seven times, in addition he was twice in Manchuria in 1917 when he also crossed Siberia in both directions, India and Ceylon four times, the Straits Settlements four times. He has made three tours in the Near East, one of which in 1924 included North Africa. He has been three times in the Philippines, twice in Burma, once in Siam. He has made one visit to South America, one to the West Indies and Panama, one to South Africa. One of his latest fields of exploration was the Dutch Indies. All this means power to judge progress in a particular field, to determine the value of movements and tendencies, to learn the secrets of strength and weakness in countries, races, missions, churches, and to know where the reinforcements of Christendom should be thrown into the line. The natural bent of his mind for the ceaseless relating of experience and knowledge in different fields has been progressively developed by these opportunities. Could the Federation or the International Missionary Council ever have become what they are without Dr. Mott's unusual chance of reviewing them constantly in the light of a changing world situation ?

In later years he has gradually developed a staff in New York who, by recording and collating the results of his world tours and conducting further research, not only prepare material for him when considering policy, but have made available for the Federation amongst other organisations, the harvested results of his unique experience.

To him there has been given also a many-sided equipment. Few men, if any, in the history of the Church, have had such an unusual combination of gifts ; statesman *and* evangelist ;

administrator, organiser *and* spiritual teacher ; preacher *and* writer. As all these he has served the Federation and through it the world. But first and foremost he is :

The Missionary.

His conversion, as we have seen, was followed closely by his missionary call. The Mount Hermon Conference in 1886 and its sequence made him a member of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions and of its first Committee ; the first big outreach of his mind and heart was towards the mission field. It was in pioneer work amongst students for missions that for good and all John R. Mott took the world into his ken. Henceforth the missionary motive dominated his mental and spiritual development ; it was no mere chance that he became the Chairman of the Edinburgh World Mission Conference in 1910 and that in his latest phase he has returned to whole-time service of missions as the Chairman of the International Missionary Council. It is significant that the two eldest of his four children are today serving in India. The North American Student Volunteer Movement has seen the signing of the Declaration " It is my purpose if God permit to become a foreign missionary " by no less than twelve thousand students, men and women, who have actually reached the mission field under the Missionary Boards of the United States and Canada ; and the results of the American Volunteer Movement in promoting missionary study have been as great as in recruiting.

He carried his Volunteer enthusiasm with him into other lands. Robert Wilder was, of course, the Student Volunteer pioneer *par excellence*. In Dr. Mott's early tours he gladly followed in Robert Wilder's wake. When organising the various Federation movements, he thought no movement complete without a Student Volunteer Department ; he was always depressed about the future of a movement when it gave up its Student Volunteer Department or allowed it to slide into ineffectiveness. The Student Volunteer Declaration had meant to him, as it has to many, the orientation Godwards of his whole life, and the Declaration has seemed to

him as searching and health-giving in the life of a Movement as in the life of an individual. The watchword of the Volunteer Movement too, " the Evangelisation of the World in This Generation " commanded his allegiance, and he was always ready to speak on it. The far-reaching interpretation which he gave to this watchword is given in his book on the subject first published in 1900. Principal Cairns of Aberdeen has stated that Dr Mott's interpretation and advocacy of this watchword has been one of his most distinctive and vital contributions.

The world's need has coloured all his thinking with regard to Federation and Student Christian Movement policy. The land-marks of Student Christian Movement history in the United States and Britain for him have always been the International and Missionary Student Conventions which have become quadrennial events in the American and Canadian, and British Student Christian Movements. The American series, over all but the last two of which he presided, began in Cleveland in 1891 ; the last was held in 1927-1928. On these Conventions he expended unsparing thought and effort to the end that each successive generation of students might be fired with missionary ideals. No generation must miss the call : and even in 1918, the American Convention was actually held and seven hundred delegates gathered at Northfield, the birthplace of the whole movement. He has shown an interest no less keen in the British series of such conferences though he has been present only at two of these. Similar Conventions have been held at less regular intervals by the German and the Australian Movements.

He has made and kept the Federation and its constituent Movements a missionary force in the world. Wherever he has gone, he has linked the National Student Movement with the missionary forces of the land. He has brought the universities into touch with the missionary boards and has made the missionary boards see that they must look to the universities for their supplies of recruits. There were countries and churches that never dreamt of seeking missionary recruits in the universities till the Student Volunteer Movement opened their eyes.

He is never content unless the student element is well represented on all great missionary occasions ; carefully chosen British students stewarded the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference ; and an international delegation of students stewarded the Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council. He often took Secretaries of Student Christian Movements on his tours in mission lands. Pierre Maury of the French Student Christian Movement went with him right through his tour in North Africa and the Near East in 1924.

Of course, his conception of what it means to win the world for Christ has both deepened and broadened. The Evangelisation of the World in this Generation had a wider and richer significance for him at Jerusalem, 1928, than at Mount Hermon in 1886.

He early came to see the contribution which could be made to missionary statesmanship by other nations and races than the Anglo-Saxon, and came to value the missionary message of other than Protestant churches. A church or a land or a university meant most to him in its missionary possibilities. Boldly he has approached the Patriarchs and Metropolitans of the ancient Eastern Churches to know why they undertook no missionary work, or has laid before a Patriarch some scheme by which his special branch of the Church might support a mission in China or in some Moslem area.

At first, as his writings show, he classified all missionary endeavour in the old fashioned way, as evangelistic, medical, or educational ; now he sees the need for many other sides of life to serve the missionary enterprise ; his old passion plays on new instruments. There are those who feel that the social gospel has never really had more from him than lip-service and that his Christian statesmanship has not been turned on to healing the social sores of our modern world. But the Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council with its demand for a Christian solution of all manner of social problems, rural, industrial, national, international, and interracial, owed its existence and much of its character to his thought and planning. The fact is, that he has seen social problems in their international rather than their national setting.

The World's Man.

His work on international and interracial relationships will leave its deepest mark on Church history. It is paradoxical, but none the less true, that Dr. Mott's greatest service to the *World's Federation* has been to make it and keep it truly a *World* movement. He ceaselessly relates everything that comes within his ken to the purpose of God for the world. For him every country, every nation, every race, every church has its vocation, its part to play in relation to the world's need ; he tries to convince them of their vocation.

He has always fought sectionalism in the Federation. Almost every other so-called world movement has been more or less localised in one continent or at least hemisphere, but not the Federation. He has spared no effort to keep the Federation for the world. At times, with the opinion of the other Federation officers and committee members at first against him he has succeeded in placing Federation conference or committee meeting just where he saw it might best serve the world as a whole. In 1921, when almost everyone else thought that both reconstruction and economic considerations demanded that the next Federation conference should be in Europe, he saw the claims of Peking. He brought T.Z. Koo all the way from China to the Federation Executive Committee meeting in Holland expressly to plead for a conference on Chinese territory. In a twenty minutes speech the Chinese made his case and from that moment had the backing of us all, in bringing the first post-war Federation Conference to bear on the needs of the Far East and of the problems of the Pacific Area in their relation to the whole world. His point gained, Dr. Mott at once turned our attention to securing a truly international delegation to Peking in 1922 despite all the difficulties of time and expenditure.

He has always disliked to have to admit that the biased configuration of water and land and the uneven distribution of nations on the earth's surface still makes Europe the best continent in which to hold a conference for the largest number of nations with the least expenditure of time and money.

He has always opposed regional organisation within the Federation, whether in Europe or in the Pacific, an opposition which has been most salutary, though probably maintained after the danger point had passed. He has never seen a Student Movement in isolation, but always with a world vocation to fulfil.

As with national movements, so also with international. He sees each with its peculiar vocation, but those vocations closely interrelated. The Federation has never been for him an isolated world movement; he has always seen its task in relation to that of the whole Catholic Church as well as to other world organisations in the International Missionary Council, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, and so forth. This attitude of mind has been at times extremely trying to one-movement men and women as most of us are. The devotees of some one world movement chafe while they wait their turn in his plan of campaign for the world. He has never fully understood their impatience. The amount of time he must spend in explaining to this or that movement its relation to that or this, has always been a trial to him though manfully he has gone through with it. The relationship, for example, of the Federation to the World's Y.M.C.A. and the World's Y.W.C.A. in joint witness to the world's youth was crystal clear to him. Why then, must he spend so many weary hours in conference on this relationship?

It is all this which has made him strive for The Christianisation of International and Interracial Relationships and has made him also A Man of Peace.

One side of war, of course, has had a perennial attraction for him — the strategy of campaigns and the tactics of battle. He devours war books, and his rather rare metaphors are, or were, often drawn from war. I shall never forget a visit to the battle field of Gettysburg with the Motts and Principal David Cairns, and a day spent by these two men of peace in a car piled high with war books, visiting every corner of the field and reliving the conflict. But his academic interest in battle fields seems to have waned since the Great War came

and burnt its horror into his soul. The interests of the Federation have forced him to ceaseless endeavour to bring students of different nations and races into relations of understanding and good-will. He has spent special pains to bring together, whether by conferences, or by other means, the groups between which friction was greatest : Britons and Boers : Americans and Spaniards : Chinese and Japanese : Japanese and Russians : English and Indians : Americans and Filipinos.

Just before the War, he was trying to bring into existence a Student Christian Movement in that race whirlpool of Europe, the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. Shall we ever forget that conference in Vienna where, after endless negotiations, a curious federation of three movements within that Empire was formed, a German, a Czech, and a Polish Movement ; while at the conference, Hungarian, Serbian and Bulgarian delegates watched suspiciously lest their interests should somehow be imperilled by what was proposed. So great was the racial and political difficulty that, incredible as it may seem, it was actually proposed that the official language of the loose combination should be English ! A few months later that combination was blown sky-high by the first guns of the Great War.

Then came the test of twenty years Federation work. For three years, by correspondence, by visitation, through Federation publications, through vast schemes of welfare for soldiers, for prisoners-of-war, for refugee students and so forth, he laboured to maintain the net-work of Federation relationships until peace should come again. Throughout that period, he and Dr. Karl Fries, his faithful friend the Chairman of the Federation, as its officers as well as members of neutral nations, endeavoured impartially to serve all. Of course they were misunderstood on both sides and it is criticisms of his actions during the time of War that have brought Dr. Mott perhaps nearest to martyrdom. Even after America came into the War, his work towards reconciliation went on, the channels were kept open and as soon as peace came, the waters of friendship could begin to flow through them once more. Peace brought an entirely fresh set of international

problems to the Federation on which he has spent himself unsparingly.

Questions of race are inextricably mixed with international questions ; but there are many regions of Federation activity where the friction point to be smoothed is rather racial than national. The Federation was a white man's movement in its origin, nay more, a Nordic movement, if that objectionable term has any meaning. Nevertheless, it has aimed from the first at being interracial.

Perhaps here more than anywhere else the Federation Movements have given a lead to the Churches ; this has especially been the case in non-Christian lands. There in the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A., particularly in their Student Departments, indigenous leadership has been fostered : there, first of all, the white man has learned to work side by side with and under the men of another race or colour. It may be fairly claimed that the advanced position taken at Jerusalem on the relationship between the Older and Younger Churches, is largely the outcome of an attitude between races engendered in the Federation, at least in part, by Dr. Mott's own attitude. He has always shown himself sensitive to racial susceptibilities, rights and feelings, and has gone to almost any length to remove a stumbling block. One race question to which he has given much attention is that oldest of all race problems, the relation between Jew and Gentile : another, which has claimed his special attention (and naturally as an American), is the Negro question.

Despite the immense difficulties, the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. have been pioneers in race relationships in the United States of America, as elsewhere, and the Interracial Councils and other efforts towards cooperation between Black and White owe much to the Associations. Dr. Mott rejoicingly used the principles of the Federation on race questions to secure a step forward in the application of those principles in his own land at the time of the Lake Mohonk Conference of the Federation in 1913. He not only saw to it that the United States delegation included Negroes, but endorsed such a system of seating the Conference dinner tables day by day, by lot, that no race or nation could avoid sitting

next its own special stumbling block, and the Southern Negro at times found himself next the Southern white.

From the time he visited South Africa in 1906 onwards, he did much to forward a Christian solution of the somewhat similar problem in South Africa and to secure for Max Yergan the chance of which he has made such wonderful use. At the Beatenberg Committee of the Federation in 1920, he encouraged the appointment of a Commission to make a special investigation of Negro student life and conditions outside the United States.

Of course his international and interracial sense has developed. He started as a good American and has remained such : it probably took him, like the rest of us, some time to shed the belief that the ways of his own country were necessarily the best. He is no mere cosmopolitan. To get anywhere you must start from somewhere ; the born cosmopolitan gets nowhere, for he cannot learn by comparison and contrast.

The Unity of Christendom.

Less realised than his international work, but none the less significant has been Dr. Mott's work in drawing the Christian Churches nearer together.

True he did not start out as champion of Christian unity, but his dominant passion has made him one. Brought up in the Methodist Episcopal Church of America he probably started on his career with a general conviction of fundamental unity amongst all men who accept Christ as Lord, but without much sense of the value of the Church or of the values in the different Churches. His account of his first tour round the world shows more than once that in those days he took it for granted that except from a strong Protestant base, the evangelisation of any land was impossible ; thirty-five years ago, a student movement with an inter-confessional basis was but little in his thoughts.

Gradually he broadened his base. He started no doubt from an appreciation of the strategic value of support from the leaders of the Christian Churches for the movements he served. His book on *The Pastor and Modern Missions* in

1904 and the series of pamphlets on *The Christian Ministry* which he edited in 1909 are milestones in the development of his convictions about the supreme importance of a Clergy with a world-wide view of the Kingdom. But his striving to draw Church Leaders into these movements soon ceased to be a mere matter of expediency. Far more fundamental became his experience of fellowship with members of unfamiliar communions. The British Student Christian Movement early brought him into close touch with Anglican leaders of many different schools of thought : they helped him and he helped them and for many years the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have been his personal friends. The same thing is true of the leaders of the Scandinavian and German Lutheran Churches and every variety of Reformed Church. Later on visits to Russia and the Near East gave him touch with the great men of the Eastern Orthodox Church ; spiritual fellowship with them (and perhaps too an innate love of gorgeous ceremonial) led him to value and seek out their contribution to Christendom. On his Near East tour in 1911, few indeed were the Patriarchs of any ancient Eastern Church that he did not visit ; with several of them he formed personal friendships.

Perhaps the most interesting of all his many services to the Oriental Churches, interesting because it was a direct effort towards Reunion, was the *Syrian Church Unity Conference* held in Calcutta, January 1913, when the presence in India of Dr. Mott, an American and a heretic, was the focal point for a conference of the leaders of the four sections into which the Ancient Syrian Church of Travancore has been rent, Jacobite, Mar Thoma, etc. At this conference for a better understanding and cooperation, he took the chair.

His first introduction to an ancient Eastern Church was a tragic one. He and his wife were in Constantinople in 1895 at the time of the Armenian massacres : what they saw then perhaps explains why he has always been so ready to stand by the ancient churches in time of trouble. The Federation is following him in the care it has taken to foster the Russian Student Christian Movement in exile, and the Russian Orthodox Theological School in Paris.

His touch with the Roman Church for obvious reasons has never been so close : though the depth of his interest in that Church may be measured by the fact that eighty different Roman Catholic magazines are scanned for his benefit. He has, of course, stood for cooperative effort of every kind between the Christian Churches in the mission field and elsewhere. Under his leadership the International Missionary Council and all its constituent National Councils, many of which he has helped to establish, have come to be representative of many societies and churches which formerly stood aloof from cooperative efforts.

What of the Churches and the Federation in so far as Dr. Mott has influenced their relationship ? So closely were some Student Christian organisations at their beginning linked with " pietist " movements of various kinds, the *Gemeinschafts-Bewegung* in Germany, for example, that there was grave danger that such Student Christian Movements might develop an aloof attitude towards the Churches, and become the child of a religious clique. From this they were saved by the steady persistence with which Dr. Mott sought out the ecclesiastical leaders, introduced them to the Student Movement and the Movement to them, encouraged the entrance of the Movement into the Theological Colleges and the entrance of the Theological Colleges into the Movement, and so forth. Today the same sort of influence is doing something to save certain modern Student Movements from antichurch tendencies of a different kind — the tendency to break away from institutional Christianity altogether.

The Federation today is church-conscious ; it is œcumenical in its principles and aims. It is one of the forces making for Reunion. A study of those who made their mark at the Lausanne Conference on Faith and Order in 1927 shows the names of the Archbishop of York, Siegmund Schultze, Dr. Tatlow, Professor Alivisatos, Professor Zankoff, Bishop Azariah, John Victor, Archbishop Söderblom, Timothy Lew, Canon E.S. Woods, and not a few others who are well-known figures in the Federation. Many of them had their first introduction to the Lausanne range of thought through an invitation from Dr. Mott in some way to serve the Federa-

tion. One of his most recent experiences was that of presiding over a gathering early in the present year in Athens of prominent ecclesiastics of Eastern Orthodox Churches in the interest of the religious culture of their youth.

Dr. Mott's own attitude has helped to make the Federation œcumenical. The Nyborg decision to admit confessional Student Christian Unions to the Movements, was a courageous step. Perhaps it even startled him ; but his own bold steps had made it possible.

The Evangelist.

But fundamental in Dr. Mott's work for the Federation as is the bringing to bear of his world mind, displayed in international, interracial and œcumenical relationships, there is something more fundamental still, his personal loyalty to Jesus Christ as Saviour and as Lord. Unlike not a few world workers, he has never lost himself in a maze of causes : his devotion to the Kingdom has never made him forget the King and the desire to proclaim the King.

It has given depth to the Federation that Dr. Mott adds to the statesman's gift the gift of the evangelist, a rare combination. He has never entered a country merely to organise a Student Movement. His pioneer efforts have always been efforts of evangelism. Missions to students were his opening wedge in Russia, Serbia, Bulgaria, India, Japan, China, Australia, New Zealand, and many another land. For many Federation leaders, their first call into their Movement was the personal Call to Christ which they heard from Dr. Mott. Students have responded to his message concerning Christ ; and have then formed a Movement to proclaim amongst other students the Christ he has proclaimed to them.

Thus the impulse which led to the formation of every movement which he has pioneered, has been spiritual. In those earlier days, when he could devote weeks to visiting a Student Movement, he was never content unless the programme included missions in university centres thoroughly prepared for.

It was Moody's death that called John Mott to do the work of an evangelist. Moody's missions, despite his

unpolished forcefulness, or perhaps through that very thing, had meant much in the universities of North America and Britain. In America Moody was the evangelistic force in the universities and student conferences found their natural centre in his Mount Hermon and Northfield institutions. He died before his mantle was seen to fall on others. John Mott, Robert Speer, and one or two of their friends saw the gap left, recognised a call to do what they could to fill it, and themselves began to hold missions in the colleges. A gift was stirred up in John Mott and few years have passed in which he has not held two or more missions in American universities as well as on his Federation tours.

To live through one of Dr. Mott's missions is a strenuous experience, even to the sympathetic spirit there to help. Temple Gairdner used to say, "I always go to bed early the day before Mott is going to speak". What then must his message mean to those who would fain escape its searchlight. He probes most deeply when during a mission he comes to handle the question of personal purity — stern to the sin, but tender and understanding to the sinner : one does not know him till one has heard him on this subject, and has seen moreover the length to which he will go to seek out and help fallen men back to self-control and service.

Bible Study and Prayer.

The Federation owes much to Dr. Mott in its spiritual life. The Federation Movements were born in an atmosphere which was prayerful as well as evangelistic. Some of us still cherish certain booklets, which meant much to us in our early struggles to lead the Christian life : *Bible Study for Personal Spiritual Growth* ; *The Secret Prayer Life* ; *The Morning Watch*. The message of these leaflets went home just because behind it lay a life of endeavour to practise the presence of God. Travelling with him on long journeys, men see the Testament in his hand, morning by morning, and the withdrawal of spirit for a time even in the crowded railway carriage. He has always sought out men and women who have power in prayer, to learn their secret. Andrew Murray in South Africa, Pastor Ding Li Mei in China, Mathilde

Wrede in Finland, Lilius Trotter in Algeria : he has hesitated at no cost to bring such men and women to Federation Conferences to give their best to students.

The Day of Prayer for Students has always been central in his thought of Federation life : he spent much time in drawing up the Annual Call to Prayer ; he knew it mattered. In 1901, when he was doing evangelistic work amongst Chinese students, in a conservative city, where every influence seemed hostile, hundreds of Chinese students :

“ Announced their purpose to become investigators of the Christian truth ... when exhausted I went to my room that night, I marvelled at the unmistakable proof of God’s living power, but could not understand it until I recalled that this very Sunday was the Universal Day of Prayer for Students and that in over forty countries, earnest bands of Christian students were remembering in prayer this special campaign. ”

Dr. Mott would have shrunk from any tour for which he had not sought the prayers of many friends, to whom he had sent a copy of his itinerary, with map, and a statement of his needs for intercession.

It has been a sacred experience for some of us, when our friend has broken through his reserve and shared with a small group some of the secrets of God’s work in his own soul and life : he told perhaps of carefully made plans for years of work, abandoned because of some clear call from ‘ a man from Macedonia ’ which turned his work into some unexpected channel.

Attention to Detail.

The man of vision is rarely the man of detail. Dr. Mott is both, and has taught the Federation not only to think in continents, but to despise no detail which may help to carry the vision out. By the sweep of his statesmanship in a twenty minutes’ talk he will make the Federation Executive, a hard-headed group, against all their previous convictions, believe that the next Federation Conference must be held in some fantastically difficult and expensive part of the earth.

Without chance to recover their breath, he plunges them straight into the details which may make that Conference successful. He is never content with arranging a general Conference programme ; he is restless till every detail is settled right ; the heating and lighting of the hall, the seating of the committee, the reporting, the interpreters and their training, the music, the musicians, the hymns and their tunes, the arrangement of the exhibits ; the opportunities for private and public prayer ; press arrangements ; seating at meals ; some attractive excursion to some beautiful or historical place.

At times we chafed at the time he would spend on the arrangement of a book stall : but the outward organisation of Federation Conferences went on wheels, and there was leisure to deal with wider matters of judgment and policy.

His instinct for perfection has served the Federation no less well in the matter of its records. What is mere ' filing ' to some, is ' archives ' to him, and when at length he fulfils his promise to write the history of the Federation, the material will be there, complete and in shape. This we shall owe to the work of his henchmen in New York, men who like Mr. King know many languages and let slip nothing. For them ' a scrap of paper ' is sacred. Dr. Tatlow records that the New York office has harried him to produce a leaflet published a quarter of a century ago, missing from the New York archives, and completely forgotten by the British Movement. The World War could not prevent the regular issue of the Federation Directory and Exchange List, the Annual Call to Prayer, *The Student World*, and the annual volume of Reports of Movements.

Watch him prepare for a visit to some new country. He secures the right introductions to men and women influential in the religious, social or educational sphere, Ministers of Education, Heads of Colleges, Oecumenical Patriarchs Archbishops, Moderators, and their like. He secures a few introductions from statesmen — Roosevelt or Viscount Grey. He interviews anyone who knows the lie of the land. A winter-sports holiday in Switzerland was to be guarded for rest before a tour in Russia and South Eastern Europe.



Founders of the Worlds Student Christian Federation at Vadstena Castle, 1895
(*Dr. Mott is third from left.*)

But, alas, I introduced him to the French Professor from Edinburgh, a veritable well of knowledge on social and religious movements in that area ; and Dr. Mott spent hours pumping him dry.

He fills a heavy trunk with books (it needs its iron bands). For the voyage to South Africa in 1906, it was filled with piles of Blue Books, biographies of Livingstone, Cecil Rhodes, Sir Bartle Frere, Kruger and Chako, the Zulu king of Slaughter, and histories of the Boer War, then so recent. Speculation was rife amongst the men on board about this man who sat on deck reading book after book and often, after tearing out a page or two, flinging them into the sea. One day, as he sat with his back to a lounge window, a young man stole inside, crept to the window determined to know in what deep subject this enigma was buried. He peeped, threw up his hands and whispered to the expectant crowd " King Solomon's Mines " !

Arrived at a country he sees the national Parliament at work if possible, visits picture galleries, consults the trusted few on snags to be avoided in manner, deportment and even dress. To conciliate national custom in Cloud Cuckoo Land he will wear a bowler hat with a frock coat. But he really gets down to business (what a weary business !) when, having secured the best available interpreter, he goes through his addresses with him till sure that the man has understood every argument and illustration ; all the while he keeps a local secretary or a theologian or both sitting by to weed his talk of every possible religious or political stumbling block.

In later days much of this detailed preparation has been done for him by others. At the recent Conferences on the *Christian Approach to the Jews*, he brought with him twenty typewritten volumes bearing on every phase of Jewish life and thought today : they had been prepared for him by his research corps in New York, based on outlines prepared by him in advance.

Finance.

One of the most original contributions which Dr. Mott has made to the Federation and the Church is his attitude towards

the raising of money. Other men and women have been powerful evangelists, pioneers of great movements, organisers ; others have prevailed in prayer ; is there in Christian history any other man who has secured such great offerings of money for the Church of God ? He has raised over sixty million pounds. Fields ripe to the harvest have been reaped by golden sickles, while his faith and imagination have sought found and thrust into the right hands.

In his Federation work "an appeal to a special donor" has provided now a pioneer Secretary in Australia and New Zealand to nurse the new-born Australian Student Christian Movement in 1896 ; now, an English Secretary to follow up the newly-awakened interest amongst the English students in South Africa in 1906 ; now, a woman Secretary for the Federation. The epoch-making Conferences of the Federation, at Peking, Tokyo, Constantinople and Mysore would never have been possible without the special funds Dr. Mott raised to bring carefully chosen delegates from the ends of the earth. When he saw the need, he saw the money to meet that need, and set to work to get it ; he financed foreign student work in certain European centres and vast schemes of Y.M.C.A. work in Eastern lands as well as in the United States. When the hounds of war were abroad, he loosed streams of money, which made possible some mitigation of war's horrors and aftermath ; Y.M.C.A. work in Prisoner of War and Concentration Camps (on both sides) and amongst men under arms ; work amongst refugee students, starving students, students interned in Switzerland. And that not only in the Great War but already during the Japanese-Russian War and the American-Spanish War. Think of the post-war by-products of such work, varied forms of reconstruction work in Europe, and the vast Boys' Work of the World's Y.M.C.A. ; the Y.M.C.A. in Czechoslovakia and Poland ; the Foyers des Citoyens in France ; the International Student Service which grew out of European Student Relief started by the Federation in 1920. He did not learn it all at once. He records his pride in the first gift he had raised of 500 dollars : his joy in the next of 3,000 dollars. Since

then he has secured a number of gifts for altruistic objects of one or more million dollars.

But other men have raised great sums of money on a lesser scale. The uniqueness of Dr. Mott's service is his attitude towards money and the way he has taught others to look at it. From his earliest days as a Secretary he has steadily sought to liberate the wealth of God's children for the Kingdom. "The big thing I learned from Dr. Mott" says Dr. Tatlow, who has raised not a little money in his time, "is to approach possible givers, sure that one is conferring a privilege on them in asking them to give". "I am not interested in money-raising save as a powerful spiritual influence on a perfectly spiritual basis" says Dr. Mott, and he declares that along with winning men to Christ the seeking for money for God's cause has brought him nearer to God than anything else in life. It has brought suffering as well as joy, and he grimly quotes the new beatitude : "Blessed are the money raisers, for in Heaven they shall stand next the martyrs".

The lessons he has learned Dr. Mott has tried to teach the Federation and its constituent Movements. He has imparted his secrets to small groups : he has spent much time on the finances of the Federation, and on getting each movement, however poor, to contribute to the Federation as well as to support itself. He has always if possible raised money for the needs of a National Movement in that country, and has tried hard to get the national leaders to share the task with him.

But few have caught his attitude and his secret. Our Movements and the Federation still go halting for lack of funds. We have not learnt the lesson of Dr. Mott's unique contribution to the spiritual life of the Church. Still it is not too late.

So far we have dealt with Mott, Maker of Movements : what of the man behind the movements ? Some of us would say that nothing has meant more to the Federation than

His Power of Friendship.

He is a great friend ; he has made men, he has chosen and trained leaders ; but the moulding force in their development

has been not his belief in their strategic possibilities, but his real, deep interest in them as human beings. Some touch with him, direct or indirect, is the first thing which has caught many a man who has later led some big movement. Count Moltke of Denmark, Baron Nicolay of Russia, are outstanding examples. Temple Gairdner has left a wonderful record of what Dr. Mott meant to him. Marshall Feng, when a private soldier, became a Christian, through hearing him speak in China!

The thought of Dr. Mott's belief in him has been the making of many a student leader. Of course, he makes mistakes, and disaster has sometimes followed; but too much trust does more for the world than too little; and he who never makes mistakes, never makes men. What wonderful care he will lavish on a man in whom he sees possibilities; arranging that he shall attend some conference, or have a few months' training in some other Movement, and making it possible financially; or, if worn out, be given a thorough rest and holiday. Never shall I forget the care for my comfort and well-being that he showed when I landed in New York, a very raw youngster, to make my first tour in America. He even gave careful thought to my clothes, and as to whether I should travel "in a trunk or in grips". He remembers every detail of the family affairs of hundreds of his friends; never forgets to inquire for a mother or child; writes hundreds of letters of congratulation on births or marriages; engagements interest him still more; few would suspect how far ahead he spies them out.

But he is best in times of trouble and sorrow. "John's always there, when you really need him" says the one who knows him best of all; and it is true. When the trouble is the man's own fault, it's just the same; how much time (and time, be it remembered, is his most precious possession) he has given to get some of us out of deep, ugly holes of our own making.

His friends mean much to him. With a big man's humility he seeks and takes advice from us all: I blush as I see the volumes of advice I have bestowed on him in the course of twenty years correspondence. He is extraordinarily

ready to admit a mistake. He makes his friends into leaders and he lets them in turn make him. He is dependent on human support and affection : it means much to him to have a friend by when he is under fire of hostile criticism, or in a tight hole. These things are true of men ; women, with some exceptions are afraid of him.

His power of friendship is the secret whereby he has made movements as well as men : he unconsciously personalises a movement, believes in it, sees its possibilities, and pours himself out for it.

Many ask the secret of his power in speaking and in personal dealing — will power ? — a magnetic personality ? Neither of these. He is too sensitive to be a dictator. It is rather the transparent depth of his convictions.

When not at Work.

Dr. Mott has served the Federation best when not serving it at all, i.e. on holiday. He has a rare power of switching off the current of world affairs and living another life completely absorbed in something other than his work : without this power, he could never return to work with the freshness that he does. I remember a thrilling day with the Motts at the mines at Kimberley, when he read, thought and talked of nothing but diamonds, their origin, production and value ; and two absorbing days at the Victoria Falls (one it is true given to visiting a station of the *Mission de Paris*) : on the way back to Johannesburg and work, we collaborated on notes for a monumental address (never delivered !) on "Seventeen Reasons why Victoria Falls is greater than Niagara". But it nearly broke his heart that he could not work in a visit to the World's View, the Rhodes' Tomb on the Matoppo Hills.

It is another man that you see in the woods, or on the mountains, swimming, boating, ski-ing, fishing, roasting sausages at a camp fire, lying in a hammock reading aloud a detective story, discussing household details, drawing horses for a small daughter, interested in birds, beasts and flowers, smiling that big smile of his, and with time to laugh his way back to vigour and freshness.

If the holiday is only an hour or two, snatched between interviewing a Prime Minister and chairing a Conference, it is still a holiday : he is off with a friend to the Zoo, or some laughter-provoking play, or to buy Christmas presents. Then it is, reacting from a life of incessantly deciding weighty questions, he indulges in the joy of indecision, and swithers long and luxuriously between one piece of china and another. Get him into a bookshop and you see him the helpless but happy prey of temptation : books, his wife says, will finally turn them out of house and home.

He has a marked love of pomp and circumstance : he will go any distance to see a procession or a national event of any kind. He snatches at every chance to talk with famous personages. Billy Sunday on the train one day, Shackleton of the Antarctic on a voyage.

In 1910, with a Student Volunteer Convention at Rochester behind and some strenuous evangelistic campaigns in Germany before, he writes :

“ I had a very restful voyage. I was in real need of it. Never did I leave America more tired. I dropped all work and read novels, detective books and war books, with a vengeance. Field-Marshal Viscount Kitchener was among our fellow-passengers. The Bishop of New York had given me a letter of introduction. He received me very cordially. We talked of affairs in Egypt, the Soudan, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, India, Ceylon, China, Japan, Russia, the United States, and Great Britain. We roamed over the fields of war, politics, education, especially of the backward races. We dealt with several persons, prominent and obscure. It was a great hour which would have interested you tremendously. ”

It certainly would. A very human man is our friend : that is why he means so much to the Federation, that very human institution.

The Cost of It All.

There are followers of Christ to whom a glorious heedlessness is given. Dr. Mott is one of these. They do not count

the cost. But their friends may and should do so for them. There is, as in St. Paul's life, " the pressing business of each day, the care of all the churches ", or all the Movements in the Federation. One would like to hear the earliest and the latest world missionary compare their experiences and methods in world evangelisation, Paul of Tarsus and John Mott. Dr. Mott has a wonderful power of never forgetting, never letting the later pictures on the Federation film blot out the memory of the earlier — never allowing Africa to obscure the needs of Latin America ; but it entails a heavy cost to mind and spirit, and a longing for the luxury of absorbing oneself in one problem to the exclusion of all others.

There is a cost to personal pride too, which all "world-workers" must pay. A world-worker can never perfect anything : he is a Jack of all trades, doing here a little and there a little, leaving finish and specialisation to others. Every Federation Secretary has kicked against this and has had to learn that there is after all a craft in being a Jack of all crafts ; but to one with John Mott's ideals of efficiency this lesson must have been peculiarly hard.

More than once a great political position has been offered him. Rumours have been rife again and again that he has accepted such a position ; but his choice between work for Christ and a legal career was made for life, and as he once wrote to me :

" All those rumours which you hear about my accepting political posts should be so classified that they may gradually add momentum to the delusion. "

" In journeyings oft " means physical cost too ; especially to one who sleeps badly, and in earlier days, at any rate, was a prey not only to sea sickness but to train sickness also. And then there is the actual physical strain resulting from the mental and spiritual effort required by constant readjustment to new environments. Habits are restful things. World's travelling secretaries can form none. Life for them is a series of fresh and exhausting incidents.

He never thinks of these things of course. But if his friends can trace in him some marks of unheeded wounds,

it should drive us to mend those weaknesses in the Federation which are his loss, because they are ours, and to seek from God that same passion to win the world for Christ, which has caused our friend so to believe in and labour in the Federation.

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